



City of Seattle 2006 - 2007

# **ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION AGENDA**

**A GLOBAL CITY ACTING LOCALLY**





## Climate Protection Initiative

*Reducing global warming pollution and improving air quality*

### Recent Accomplishments:

Launched Climate Protection Initiative

- More than 250 mayors signed onto US Mayors Climate Protection Agreement
- Released report and recommendations of Green Ribbon Commission and organized community input sessions

Seattle City Light achieved zero net emissions of global warming pollution

Reduced the City fleet's use of fossil fuels by 12% compared to the 1999 baseline; increased use of biodiesel in City fleet 4.5 times over 2003 levels

Completed retrofitting the City's fleet of heavy duty diesel trucks with state of the art emission control equipment

### Key Next Steps:

Complete the Seattle Climate Action Plan, a detailed strategy—based on Green Ribbon Commission recommendations—for reducing the city's global warming pollution and helping Seattle-area businesses and residents lower their greenhouse gas emissions

Launch the Seattle Climate Partnership, a voluntary climate protection pact among Seattle-area employers

Complete Chief Sealth Trail in southeast Seattle, and a comprehensive Bicycle Master Plan that enhances bicycling opportunities and improves connections between urban villages and centers

Continue to meet City Light's "zero net emissions" goal through conservation, renewable energy, and offset projects

Continue to increase alternative fuel and advance technology vehicles in the City fleet



## Green Seattle Initiative

*Restoring the urban forest, increasing open space and greening the built environment*

### Recent Accomplishments:

Initiated restoration on more than 75 acres of forested parklands through the Green Seattle Partnership

Created six new community gardens, focusing on underserved areas and bringing City-wide total to 70

Planted more than 4,000 new trees on major streets and in neighborhoods

Acquired more than 30 acres to preserve wild habitat, increase green space, and create eight new parks in underserved areas

Reduced pesticide use in Parks general operations by 80% from the baseline

### Key Next Steps:

Initiate restoration on 85 additional acres of forested parklands and recruit and manage 75,000 volunteer hours through the Green Seattle Partnership

Adopt an Urban Forest Management Plan, including goals for increasing tree cover

Increase vegetation, including tree preservation and planting, on private property through education, incentives and regulations such as creating flexible landscaping requirements for development projects

Increase tree planting on City property and improve maintenance of City-owned street trees

Increase open space in fast-growing neighborhoods by implementing new open space impact fees

Build green roofs on two City buildings and monitor four green roofs to inform policy and program development



## Restore Our Waters

*Protecting and improving water quality and aquatic habitat*

### Recent Accomplishments:

Launched Restore Our Waters Initiative outlining priority actions for water quality and aquatic habitat improvements

42 blocks of natural drainage systems installed

Created new grant program to provide residents and businesses with matching funds for aquatic habitat restoration (five awards totaled \$300,000)

Completed two shoreline restorations on Lake Washington, improved water quality in Green Lake and conducted a water quality study in the Duwamish at Norfolk Basin

Adopted a stronger Environmentally Critical Areas Ordinance to better protect wetlands, creek corridors and shoreline areas

### Key Next Steps:

Revise drainage code and rates to provide incentives for property owners to manage stormwater on-site with green roofs, rain gardens, rain barrels and cisterns

Improve shoreline and aquatic habitat in the Ship Canal and Lake Union through a program that directs developers' mitigation fees toward high-priority restoration sites

Install 18 new blocks of natural drainage systems

Systematically identify and implement opportunities to improve water quality and aquatic habitat as part of the City's capital improvement projects

Begin comprehensive Shoreline Master Program update



## Healthy People & Communities

*Creating healthy, livable urban centers, promoting sustainable practices and improving environmental justice*

### Recent Accomplishments:

Adopted downtown zoning changes to reduce sprawl and encourage transit-friendly development, affordable housing and green building

Continued healthy redevelopment of Northgate, South Lake Union, South Downtown and other urban centers

Produced "Green Seattle Guide" to inform and inspire individual action

Completed seven civic green building projects, bringing City total to 13

Strengthened recycling program, including increasing food and yard waste composting services

### Key Next Steps:

Complete the Livable South Downtown Plan to increase housing and improve walkability, open space and neighborhood vitality

Complete redevelopment plan for the Central Waterfront to include a healthy network of green spaces, walking and biking trails and shoreline access points

Strengthen City's Green Building Program by increasing outreach, technical assistance and incentives to developers; launch sustainable development resource center

Improve indoor air quality in affordable housing projects through enhanced construction standards and targeted outreach to building owners and inhabitants

Reduce waste and feed hungry people by strengthening programs that redirect edible food to people in need

## Green Seattle Initiative – Keeping the Emerald City Green

Seattle is rapidly losing its green. In 1972, trees covered about 40% of the city. Since then, tree cover has declined to about 18%. We are witnessing the death of our precious forested parklands as they have aged and invasive plants like ivy have choked out the next generation of trees.

This loss is so much more than aesthetic. Trees contribute value to Seattle by absorbing storm water and improving air and water quality as well as increasing our property values. Trees are part of the fabric of our quality of life in Seattle, bringing nature into our urban landscape.

The **Urban Forest Management Plan**, our first ever comprehensive plan for managing all of the trees across the city - public and private, will be ready for public comment this fall.

This plan establishes aggressive canopy cover goals and creates a framework for actions that will improve the number and condition of the city's trees. Community comments this fall will help shape the plan and our path ahead. While we are moving the plan forward for adoption later this year, the City will take the following steps toward the overarching goal of improving the condition of the city's urban forest:

- The **Green Seattle Partnership** with the Cascade Land Conservancy is ramping up efforts to restore 2500 acres of degraded forested parkland by 2025 by removing invasive species and replanting. The program's 20-year plan is ambitious and can only be achieved as a partnership with the city's residents. The investments made today will serve generations of Seattleites into the future.
- Private property makes up about three quarters of Seattle, meaning that many of our best opportunities for preserving and planting trees are in our yards and in our business districts and on our campuses. This fall, the Mayor will launch a major effort to encourage residents to **plant more trees**.
- The City will convene an **Emerald City Task Force** of developers, urban designers, builders, and residents to develop recommendations for new incentives and regulations to protect existing trees and encourage tree planting. Together we can keep the Emerald City green.



**Greg Nickels**  
Mayor of Seattle

### MAYOR'S PRIORITIES

Get Seattle moving  
Keep our neighborhoods safe  
Create jobs and opportunity for all  
Build strong families and healthy communities

"Seattleites define themselves as 'green' not only by taking a bus to work, buying a fuel-efficient car or taking a canvas bag to the market – but by the very choice they've made to live and work here. While bounded by the mountains and water, Seattle is most of all a city of trees and green spaces."

– Mayor Nickels

### Thanks to the Mayor's Urban Sustainability Advisory Panel who provided their support and guidance

Stella Chao, Executive Director  
International District Housing Alliance

Cynthia Figge, Partner  
EKOS International

Wayne Grotheer, Director  
Health, Environment & Risk Services  
Port of Seattle

Dennis McLerran, Executive Director  
Puget Sound Clean Air Agency

Rodney Proctor, Director  
Environmental Health & Safety  
Weyerhaeuser

Ken Bounds, Superintendent  
Park and Recreation

Jorge Carrasco, Superintendent  
Seattle City Light

Charlie Cunniff, Executive Director  
Environmental Coalition of South Seattle

KC Golden, Project Director  
Climate Solutions

David Levinger, President & Executive Director  
Feet First

Ben Packard, Director  
Environmental Affairs  
Starbucks Coffee Company

Scott Rusch, Vice President  
Facilities and Operations  
Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center

Chuck Clarke, Director  
Seattle Utilities

Alan Durning, Executive Director  
Northwest Environment Watch

Bert Gregory, Principal  
Mithun

Michael McGinn  
Sierra Club - Cascade Chapter

Margaret Pageler  
Ex Officio Member

Sharon Sutton, Professor  
Center for Environment, Education & Design

Grace Crunican, Director  
Seattle Transportation

Diane Sugimura, Director  
Seattle Department of Planning & Development



**City of Seattle**

Office of the Mayor  
(206) 684-4000  
[www.seattle.gov/mayor](http://www.seattle.gov/mayor)

Office of Sustainability and Environment  
(206) 615-0817  
[www.seattle.gov/environment](http://www.seattle.gov/environment)

Printed on 100% Recycled Paper